

DECLARATION, POWER OF ATTORNEY, AND PETITION

I, a below named inventor, depose and say that: (1) my residence, citizenship, and mailing address are indicated below; (2) I have reviewed and understand the contents of my attached patent application, including the claims, which is identified as U.S. Patent Application Serial No. 10/005,837, filed November 9, 2001; (3) I believe that the other below named inventors and I are the original, first, and joint inventors or discoverers of the invention or discovery in

SURGICAL ARTICLES AND METHODS

described and claimed therein and for which a patent is sought; (4) this application in part discloses and claims subject matter disclosed in earlier filed U.S. Patent Application Serial No. 09/917,443 filed July 27, 2001 and U.S. Patent Application Serial Number 09/917,562 filed July 27, 2001 and claims priority to those applications; (5) I hereby acknowledge my duty to disclose to the Patent and Trademark Office all information known to me to be material to the patentability as defined in Title 37, Code of Federal Regulations, §1.56,* (6) I hereby claim priority to previously filed U.S. Provisional Application Serial No. 60/263,472 filed January 23, 2001, U.S. Provisional Application Serial No. 60/269,829, filed February 20, 2001; U.S. Provisional Application Serial No. 60/281,350 filed April 4, 2001, U.S. Provisional Application Serial Number 60/295,068 filed June 1, 2001, and Provisional Application Serial No. 60/306,915 filed July 20, 2001; and (7) I hereby acknowledge my duty to disclose to the Patent and Trademark Office material information as defined in Title 37, Code of Federal Regulations, §1.56,* which occurred between the filing date of said earlier applications and the filing date of this application.

No application for patent or inventor's certificate on said common or said non-common subject matter has been filed by us or our representatives or assigned in any country foreign to the United States of America, except as follows:

Application
PCT Application (Attorney Docket No. AMS-PCT-029)

Filing Date
December 28, 2001
(U.S. Receiving Office)


I hereby appoint Jeffrey J. Hohenshell (Reg. No. 34,109) as my attorney and/or agent with full powers (including the powers of appointment, substitution, and revocation) to prosecute this application and any division, continuation, continuation-in-part, reexamination, or reissue thereof, and to transact all business in the Patent and Trademark Office connected therewith; the mailing address and the telephone number of the above-mentioned attorney and/or agent is:

American Medical Systems
10700 Bren Road West
Minnetonka, Minnesota 55343
Telephone No. 952-930-6135
Attention: Jeffrey J. Hohenshell

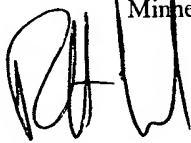
The undersigned petitioner declares further that all statements made herein of his own knowledge are true and that all statements made on information and belief are believed to be true; and further that these statements were made with the knowledge that willful false statements and the like so made are punishable by fine or imprisonment, or both, under Section 1001 of Title 18 of the United States Code and that such willful false statements may jeopardize the validity of the application or any patent issuing thereon.

Wherefore, I pray for grant of Letters Patent for the invention or discovery described and claimed in the aforementioned specification and we hereby subscribe our names to the foregoing specification and claims, declaration, power of attorney, and this petition, on the day set forth below.

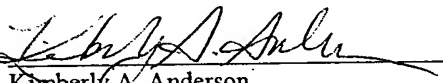
*Title 37, Code of Federal Regulations, Section 1.56 is attached. This form may be executed only when attached to the specification (including the claims) as the last page thereof.



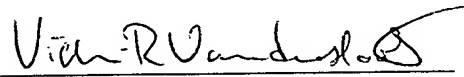
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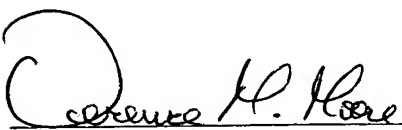
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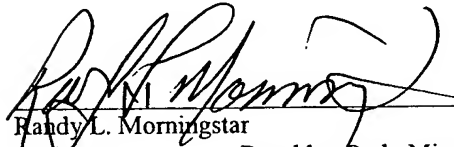


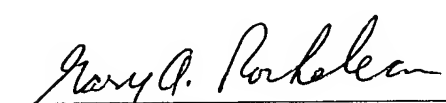
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§1.56 Duty to disclose information material to patentability.

(a) A patent by its very nature is affected with a public interest. The public interest is best served, and the most effective patent examination occurs when, at the time an application is being examined, the Office is aware of and evaluates the teachings of all information material to patentability. Each individual associated with the filing and prosecution of a patent application has a duty of candor and good faith in dealing with the Office, which includes a duty to disclose to the Office all information known to that individual to be material to patentability as defined in this section. The duty to disclose information exists with respect to each pending claim until the claim is cancelled or withdrawn from consideration, or the application becomes abandoned. Information material to the patentability of a claim that is cancelled or withdrawn from consideration need not be submitted if the information is not material to the patentability of any claim remaining under consideration in the application. There is no duty to submit information which is not material to the patentability of any existing claim. The duty to disclose all information known to be material to patentability is deemed to be satisfied if all information known to be material to patentability of any claim issued in a patent was cited by the Office or submitted to the Office in the manner prescribed by §§ 1.97(b)-(d) and 1.98. However, no patent will be granted on an application in connection with which fraud on the Office was practiced or attempted or the duty of disclosure was violated through bad faith or intentional misconduct. The Office encourages applicants to carefully examine:

- (1) prior art cited in search reports of a foreign patent office in a counterpart application, and
- (2) the closest information over which individuals associated with the filing or prosecution of a patent application believe any pending claim patentably defines, to make sure that any material information contained therein is disclosed to the Office.

(b) Under this section, information is material to patentability when it is not cumulative to information already of record or being made of record in the application, and

- (1) It establishes, by itself or in combination with other information, a prima facie case of unpatentability of a claim; or
- (2) It refutes, or is inconsistent with, a position the applicant takes in:
 - (i) Opposing an argument of unpatentability relied on by the Office, or
 - (ii) Asserting an argument of patentability.

A prima facie case of unpatentability is established when the information compels a conclusion that a claim is unpatentable under the preponderance of evidence, burden-of-proof standard, giving each term in the claim its broadest reasonable construction consistent with the specification, and before any consideration is given to evidence which may be submitted in an attempt to establish a contrary conclusion of patentability.

(c) Individuals associated with the filing or prosecution of a patent application within the meaning of this section are:

- (1) Each inventor named in the application;
- (2) Each attorney or agent who prepares or prosecutes the application; and
- (3) Every other person who is substantively involved in the preparation or prosecution of the application and who is associated with the inventor, with the assignee or with anyone to whom there is an obligation to assign the application.

(d) Individuals other than the attorney, agent or inventor may comply with this section by disclosing information to the attorney, agent, or inventor.